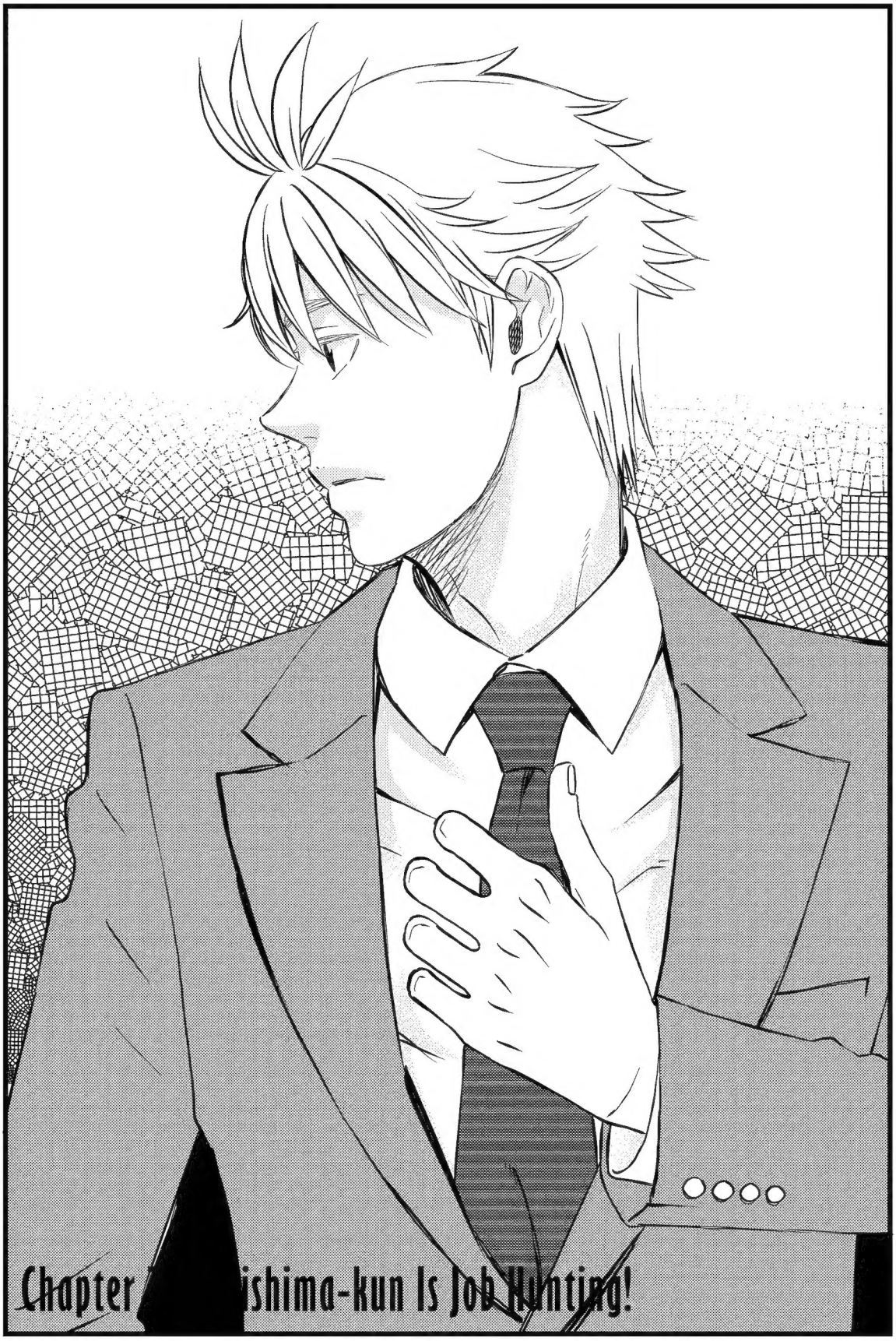
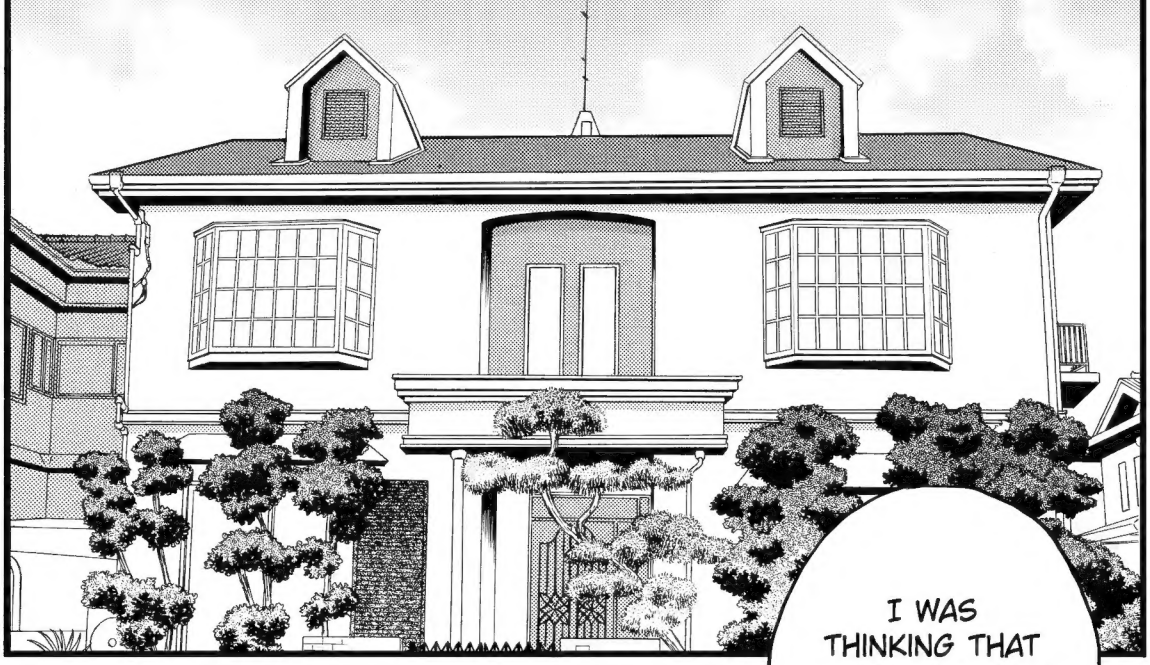


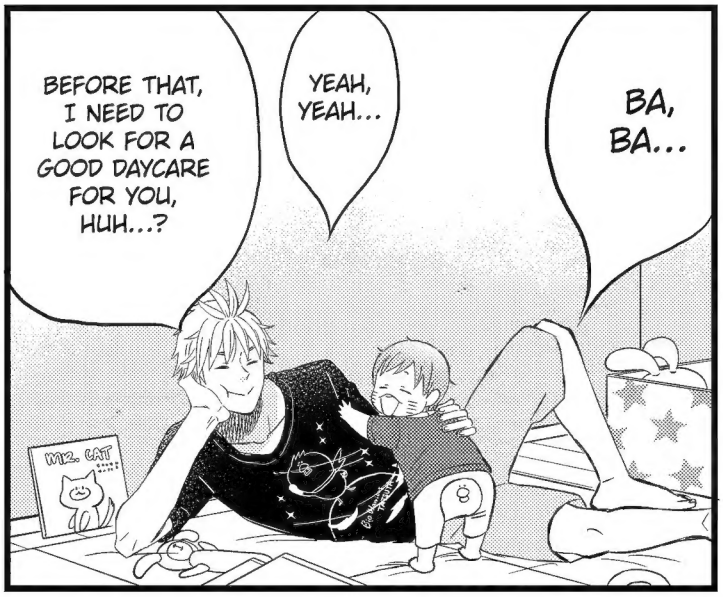
Chapter [illegible] ishima-kun Is Job Hunting!



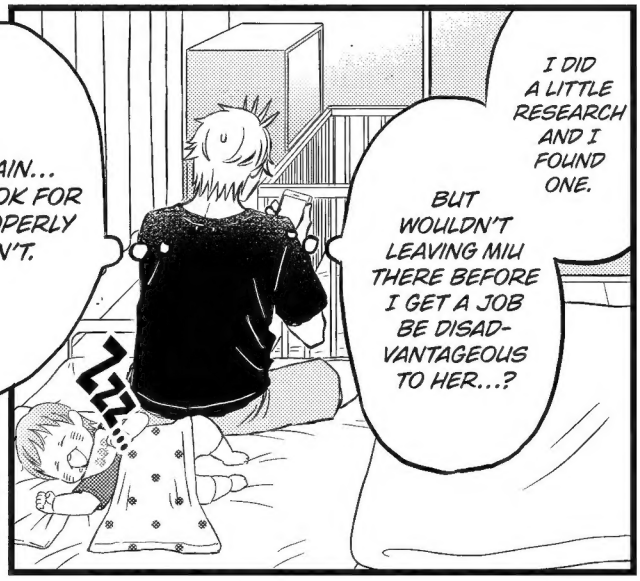
I WAS THINKING THAT I NEED TO FIND A JOB SOON, BUT...

AAAAHH...
Gaa!
Huff!
Huff!
Gaa!

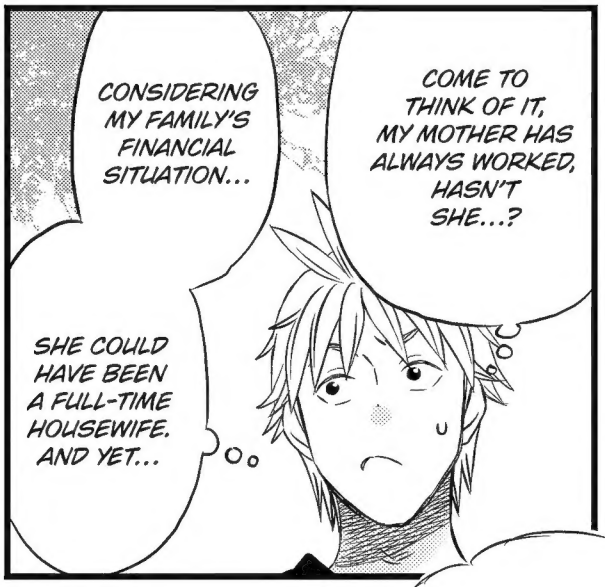
Zzz..
Zzz..


BA, BA...
YEAH, YEAH...
BEFORE THAT, I NEED TO LOOK FOR A GOOD DAYCARE FOR YOU, HUH...?
MR. CAT

Hnghh...
THEN AGAIN... I CAN'T LOOK FOR WORK PROPERLY IF I DON'T.

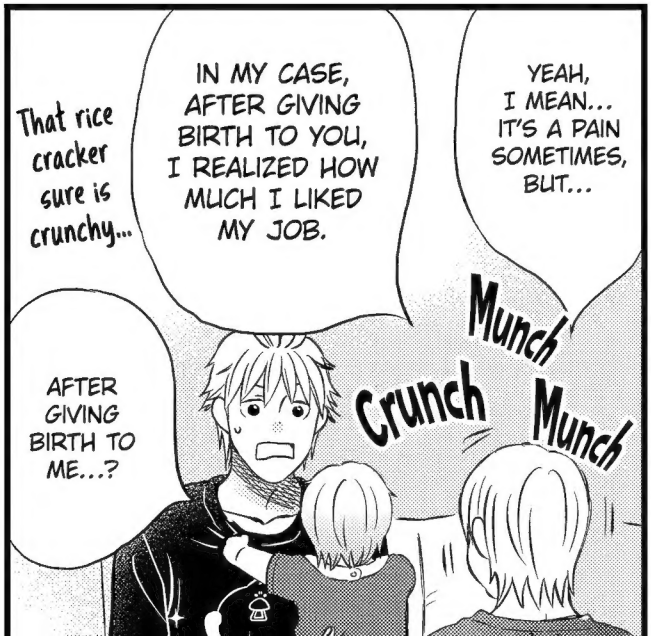

I DID A LITTLE RESEARCH AND I FOUND ONE.
BUT WOULDN'T LEAVING MIU THERE BEFORE I GET A JOB BE DISAD-VANTAGEOUS TO HER...?
Zzz...

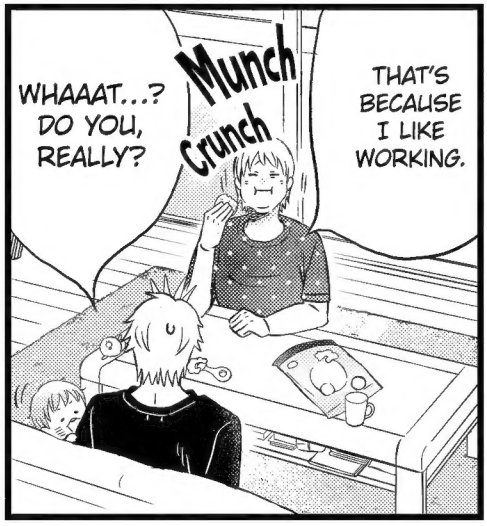
IT'S HARD TO GIVE IT YOUR ALL WHEN YOU HAVE A SMALL CHILD TO LOOK AFTER...
HMM...


CONSIDERING MY FAMILY'S FINANCIAL SITUATION...
COME TO THINK OF IT, MY MOTHER HAS ALWAYS WORKED, HASN'T SHE...?
SHE COULD HAVE BEEN A FULL-TIME HOUSEWIFE. AND YET...

FOR A FAMILY OF FOUR TO LIVE COMFORTABLY ON AI-SAN'S INCOME...
WELL... TO BE HONEST, IT'S NOT UNREASON-ABLE...

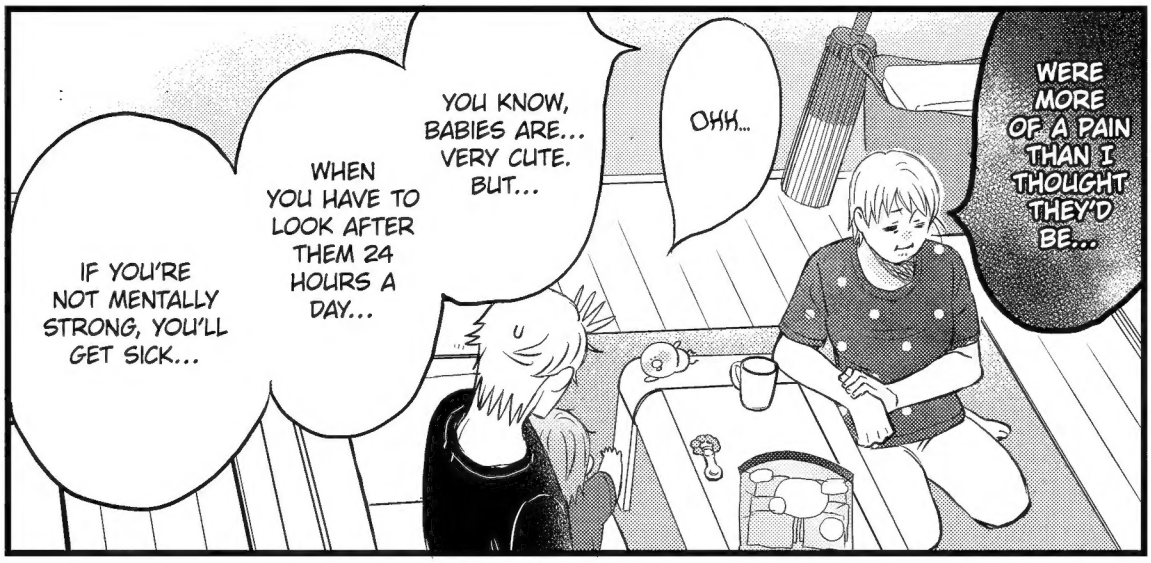
SNAP
WHY DID I KEEP WORKING, YOU ASK?

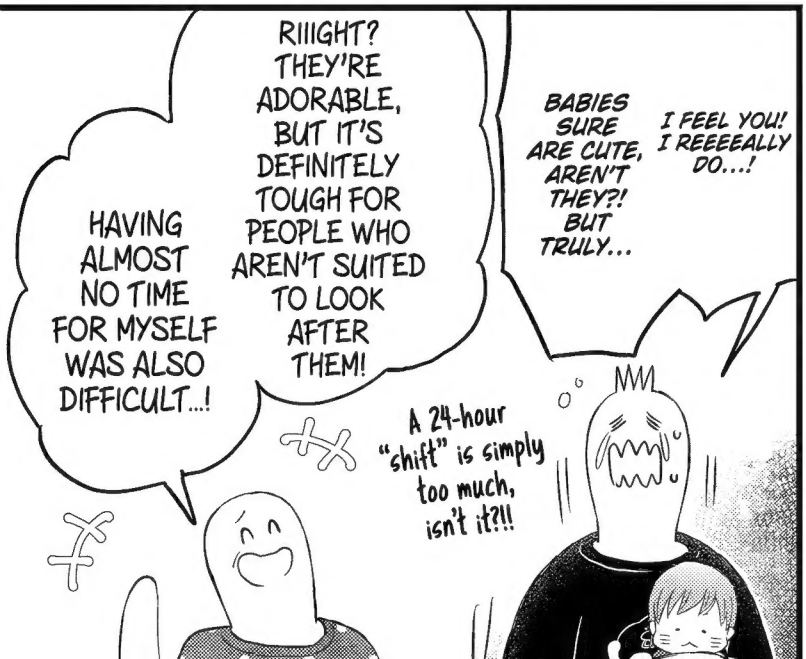

That rice cracker sure is crunchy...
IN MY CASE, AFTER GIVING BIRTH TO YOU, I REALIZED HOW MUCH I LIKED MY JOB.
YEAH, I MEAN... IT'S A PAIN SOMETIMES, BUT...
AFTER GIVING BIRTH TO ME...?
Munch
Crunch
Munch

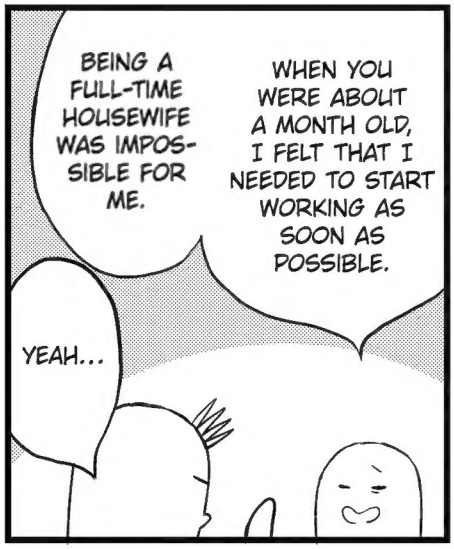

WHAAAT...? DO YOU, REALLY?
Munch
Crunch
THAT'S BECAUSE I LIKE WORKING.

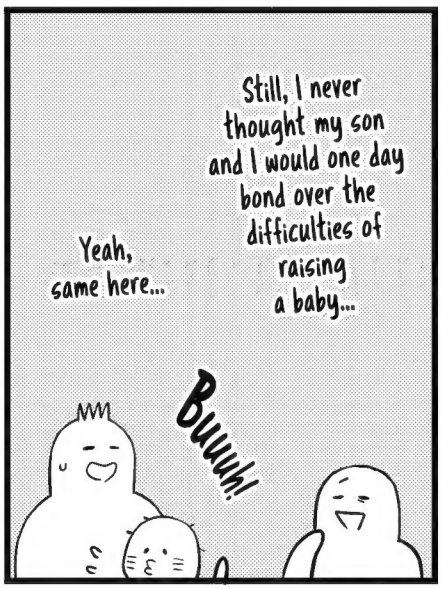
THOSE BUSY, YET WARM DAYS...
I CRIED, I LAUGHED, I WAS HAPPY AND THEN SAD... I WAS ALWAYS PAYING ATTENTION AND REACTING TO EVERY LITTLE THING YOU DID...
YOU HAD SUCH SMALL HANDS AND FEET... SUCH CUTE, ROUND EYES, ALWAYS STARING AT ME...

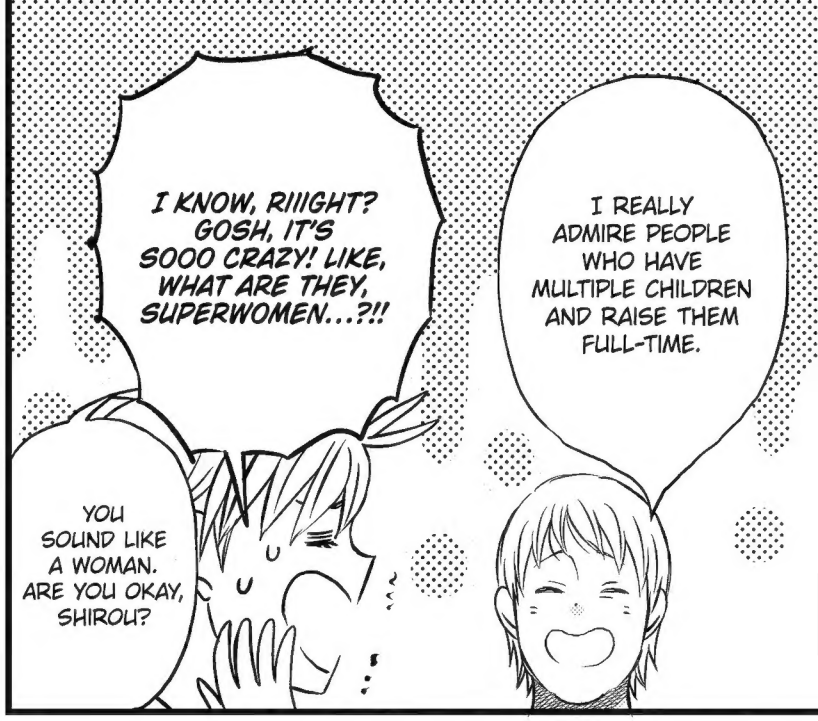
I VIVIDLY REMEMBER THE DAYS I SPENT AT HOME WITH YOU AS A BABY...


IF YOU'RE NOT MENTALLY STRONG, YOU'LL GET SICK...
WHEN YOU HAVE TO LOOK AFTER THEM 24 HOURS A DAY...
YOU KNOW, BABIES ARE... VERY CUTE. BUT...
OHH...
WERE MORE OF A PAIN THAN I THOUGHT THEY'D BE...


HAVING ALMOST NO TIME FOR MYSELF WAS ALSO DIFFICULT...!
RIIIGHT? THEY'RE ADORABLE, BUT IT'S DEFINITELY TOUGH FOR PEOPLE WHO AREN'T SUITED TO LOOK AFTER THEM!
BABIES SURE ARE CUTE, AREN'T THEY?! BUT TRULY...
I FEEL YOU! I REEEEALLY DO...!
A 24-hour "shift" is simply too much, isn't it?!!

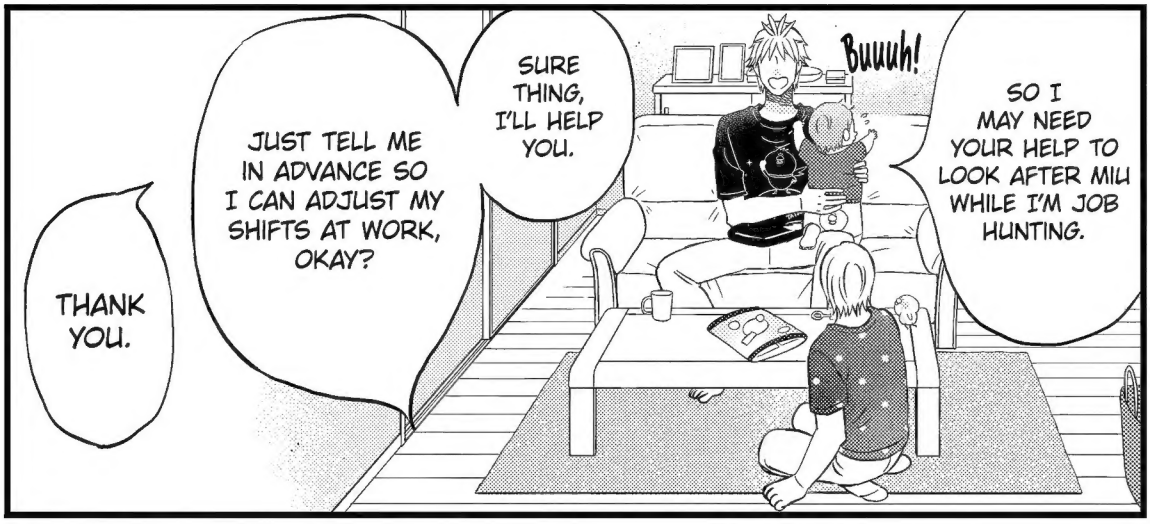

BEING A FULL-TIME HOUSEWIFE WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME.
WHEN YOU WERE ABOUT A MONTH OLD, I FELT THAT I NEEDED TO START WORKING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
YEAH...

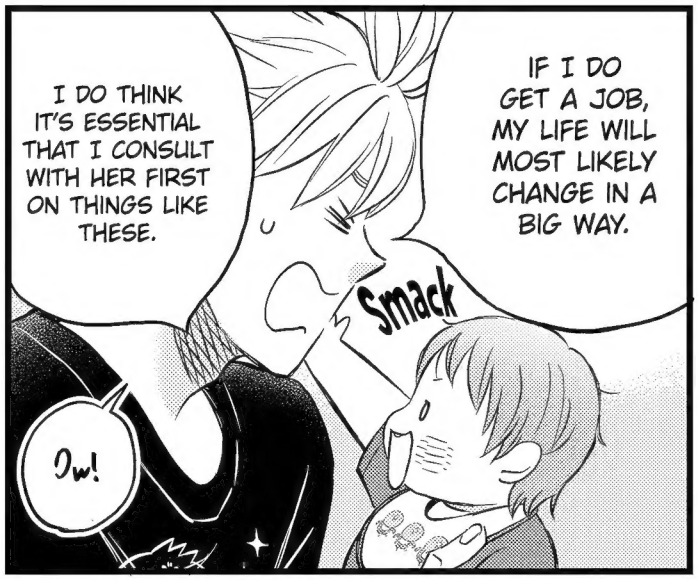

Still, I never thought my son and I would one day bond over the difficulties of raising a baby...
Yeah, same here...
Buuuh!


I KNOW, RIIIGHT? GOSH, IT'S SOOO CRAZY! LIKE, WHAT ARE THEY, SUPERWOMEN...?!!
I REALLY ADMIRE PEOPLE WHO HAVE MULTIPLE CHILDREN AND RAISE THEM FULL-TIME.
YOU SOUND LIKE A WOMAN. ARE YOU OKAY, SHIROU?

Buh! Buh! Buh!
Hey, now...
EVEN SO, I WANT TO GET A JOB.

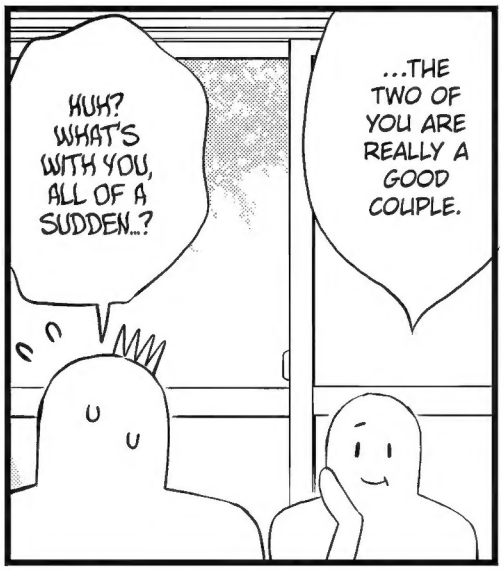
NO... I DON'T REALLY THINK THAT'S MY MOTIVATION, BUT...
ARE YOU OKAY? IF YOU'RE FEELING TIRED, I COULD HELP YOU LOOK AFTER MIU-CHAN.
IS THIS THE REASON YOU'RE MOTIVATED TO LOOK FOR A NEW JOB?

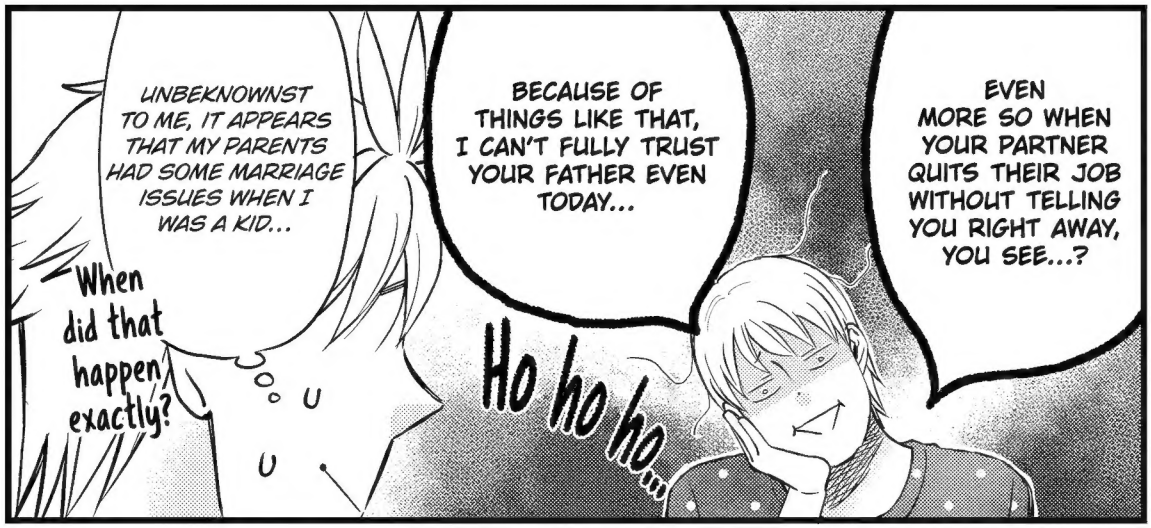

Buuuh!
SO I MAY NEED YOUR HELP TO LOOK AFTER MIU WHILE I'M JOB HUNTING.
SURE THING, I'LL HELP YOU.
JUST TELL ME IN ADVANCE SO I CAN ADJUST MY SHIFTS AT WORK, OKAY?
THANK YOU.


I DO THINK IT'S ESSENTIAL THAT I CONSULT WITH HER FIRST ON THINGS LIKE THESE.
IF I DO GET A JOB, MY LIFE WILL MOST LIKELY CHANGE IN A BIG WAY.
Smack
Ow!

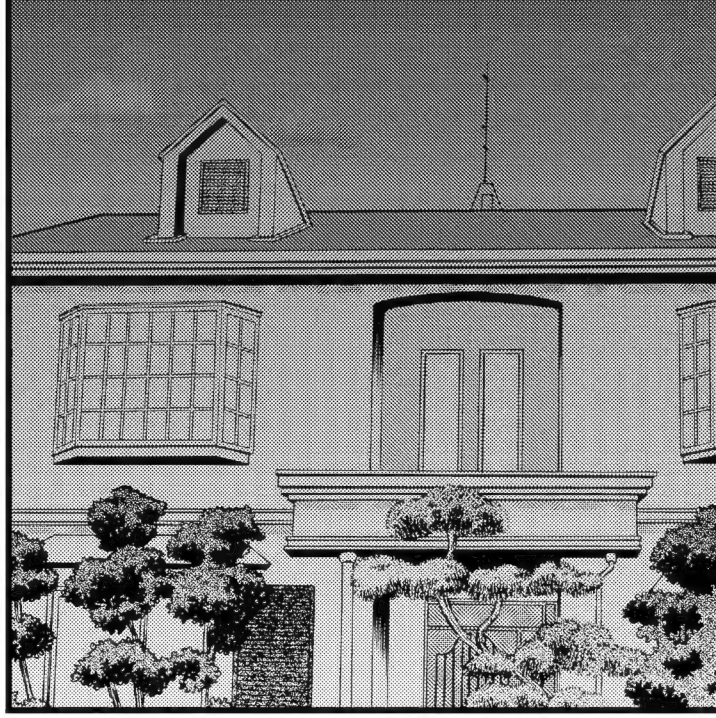
AHH...
BEFORE YOU START YOUR JOB SEARCH, THOUGH, MAKE SURE YOU TALK ABOUT IT WITH AI-SAN.
OF COURSE. I'LL DO THAT.

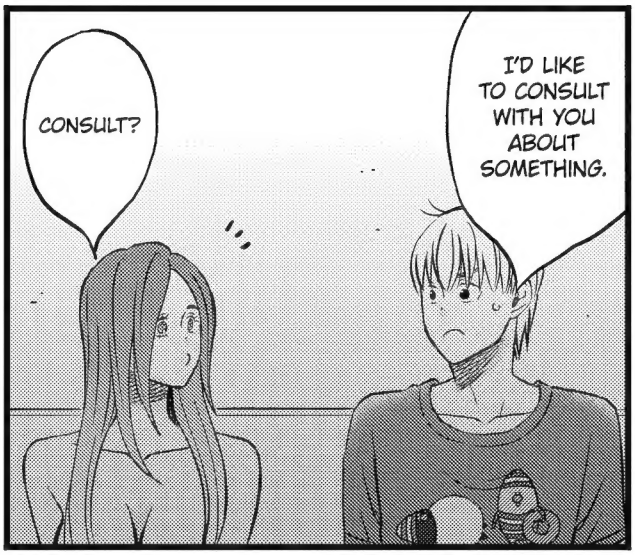
SHOULD NEVER BE POSTPONED OR KEPT A SECRET FROM YOUR PARTNER...
IT'S LIKE I SAID... TALKING ABOUT MATTERS THAT MAY AFFECT YOUR LIFE...

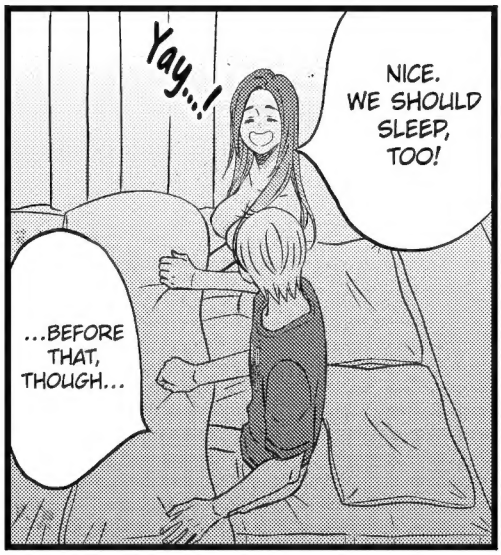

HUH? WHAT'S WITH YOU, ALL OF A SUDDEN...?
...THE TWO OF YOU ARE REALLY A GOOD COUPLE.

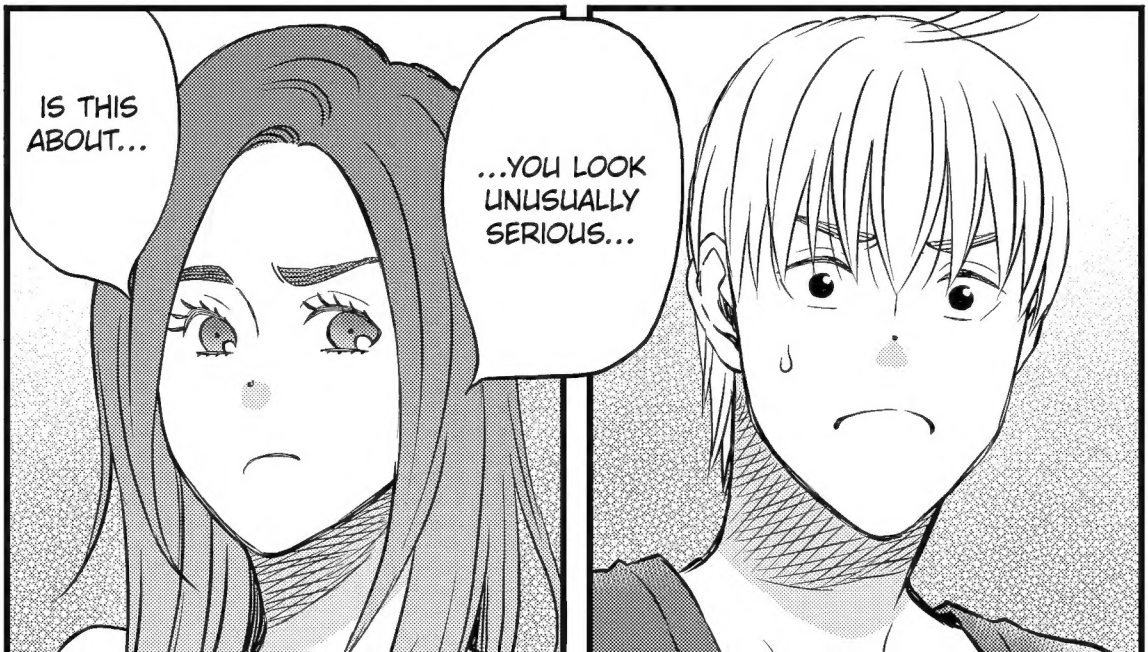

UNBEKNOWNST TO ME, IT APPEARS THAT MY PARENTS HAD SOME MARRIAGE ISSUES WHEN I WAS A KID...
When did that happen, exactly?
BECAUSE OF THINGS LIKE THAT, I CAN'T FULLY TRUST YOUR FATHER EVEN TODAY...
Ho ho ho...
EVEN MORE SO WHEN YOUR PARTNER QUITS THEIR JOB WITHOUT TELLING YOU RIGHT AWAY, YOU SEE...?

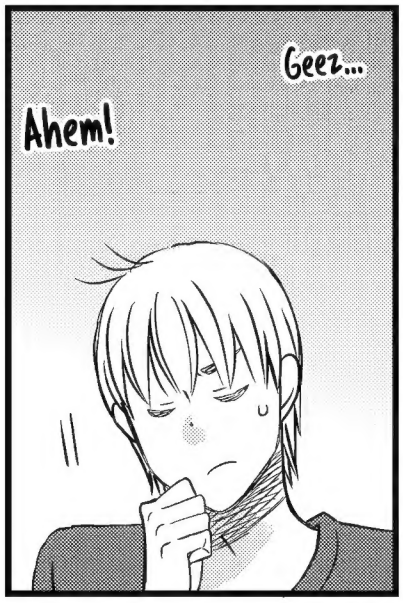
...ALL RIGHT. SHE'S ASLEEP...
ZZZ...
ZZZ...

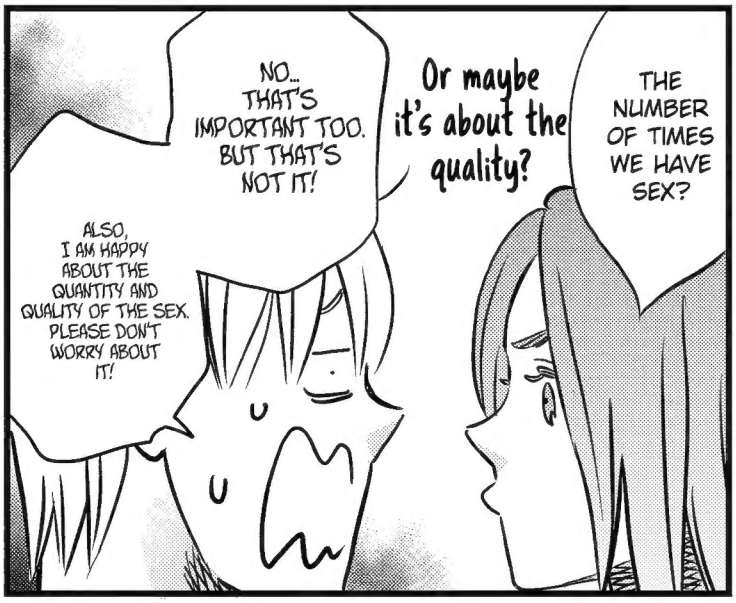


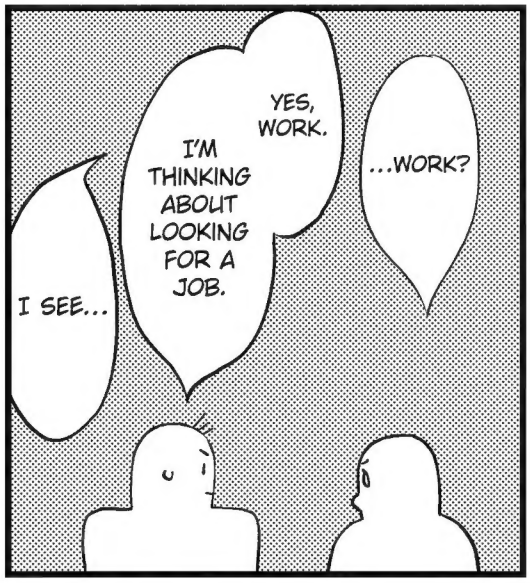

I'D LIKE TO CONSULT WITH YOU ABOUT SOMETHING.
CONSULT?

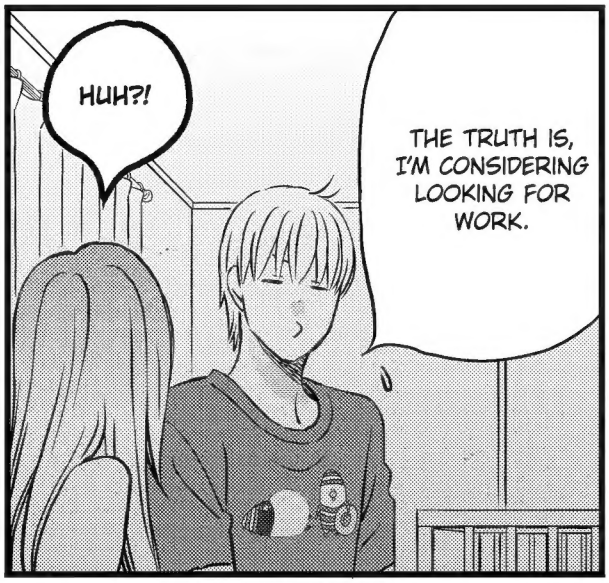

NICE. WE SHOULD SLEEP, TOO!
Yay...!
...BEFORE THAT, THOUGH...

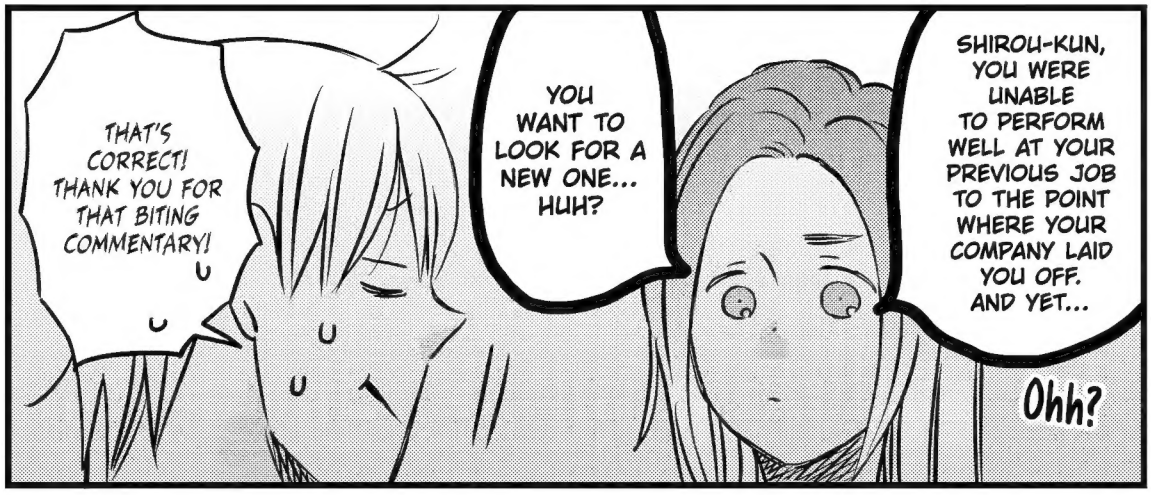

...YOU LOOK UNUSUALLY SERIOUS...
IS THIS ABOUT...

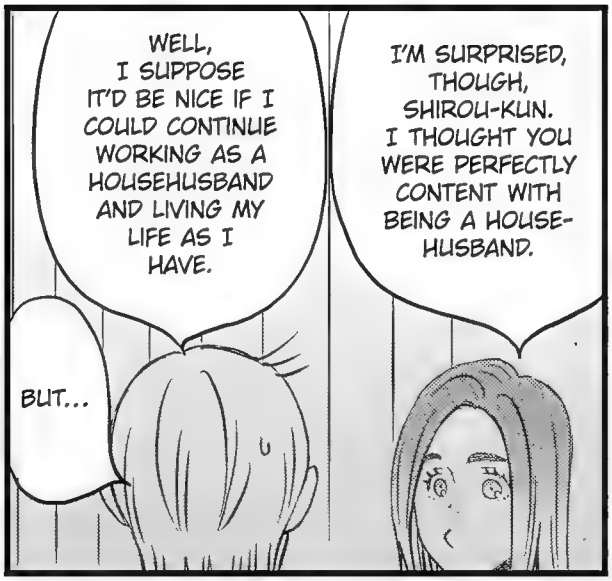

Ahem!
Geez...

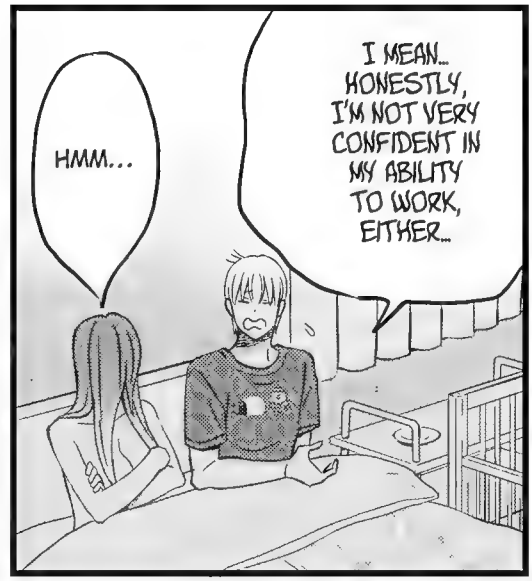

THE NUMBER OF TIMES WE HAVE SEX?
Or maybe it's about the quality?
NO... THAT'S IMPORTANT TOO. BUT THAT'S NOT IT!
ALSO, I AM HAPPY ABOUT THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF THE SEX. PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT!

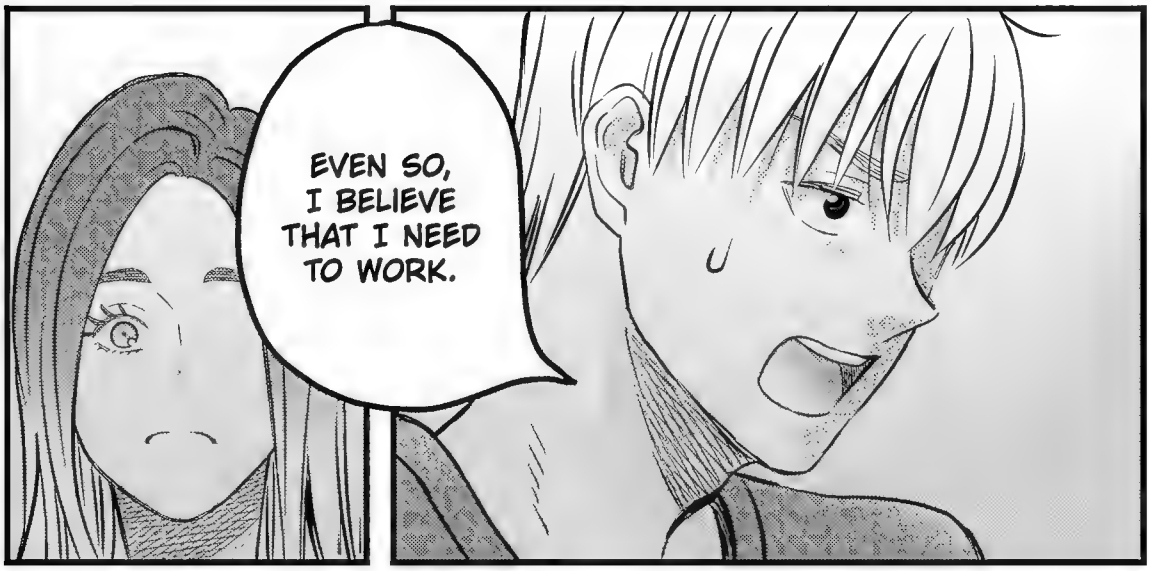

...WORK?
YES, WORK.
I'M THINKING ABOUT LOOKING FOR A JOB.
I SEE...


THE TRUTH IS, I'M CONSIDERING LOOKING FOR WORK.
HUH?!

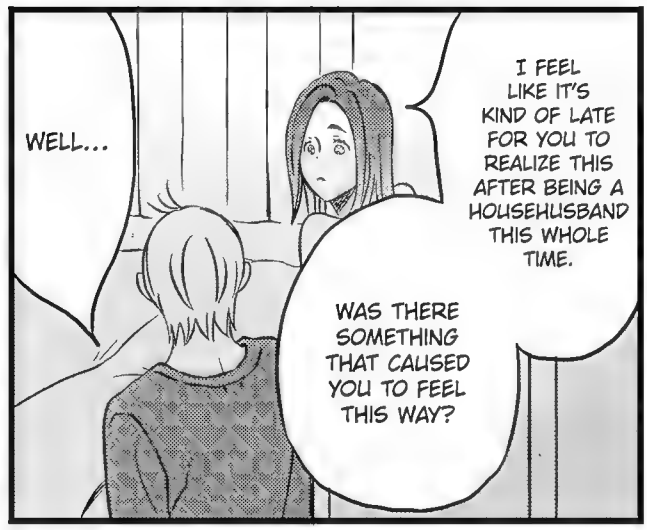

SHIROU-KUN, YOU WERE UNABLE TO PERFORM WELL AT YOUR PREVIOUS JOB TO THE POINT WHERE YOUR COMPANY LAID YOU OFF. AND YET...
Ohh?
YOU WANT TO LOOK FOR A NEW ONE... HUH?
THAT'S CORRECT! THANK YOU FOR THAT BITING COMMENTARY!

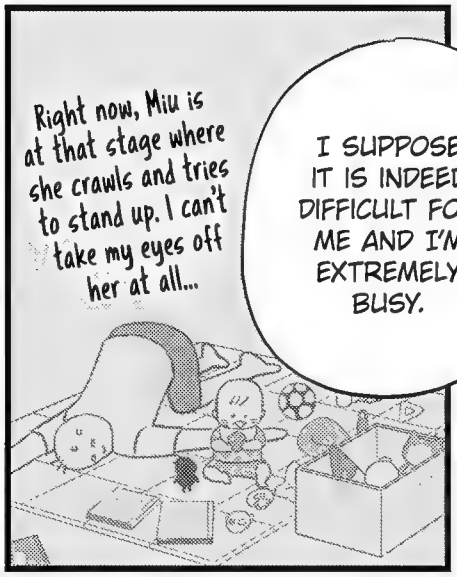

WELL, I SUPPOSE IT'D BE NICE IF I COULD CONTINUE WORKING AS A HOUSEHUSBAND AND LIVING MY LIFE AS I HAVE.
I'M SURPRISED, THOUGH, SHIROU-KUN. I THOUGHT YOU WERE PERFECTLY CONTENT WITH BEING A HOUSE-HUSBAND.
BUT...

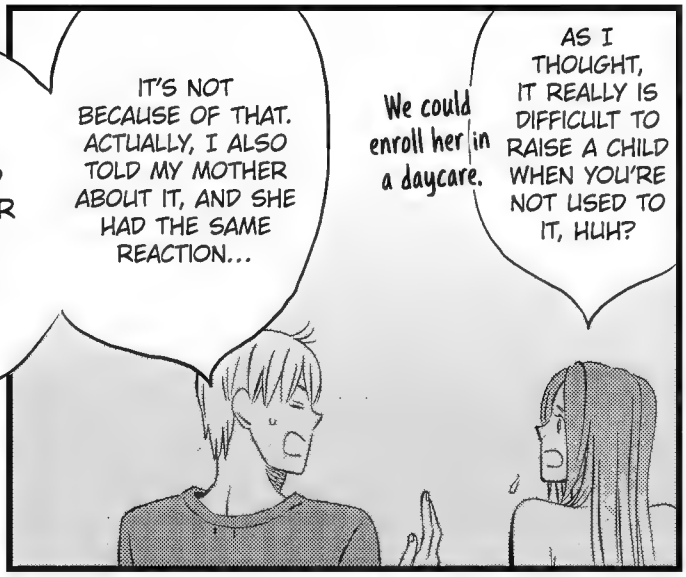

HMM...
I MEAN... HONESTLY, I'M NOT VERY CONFIDENT IN MY ABILITY TO WORK, EITHER...

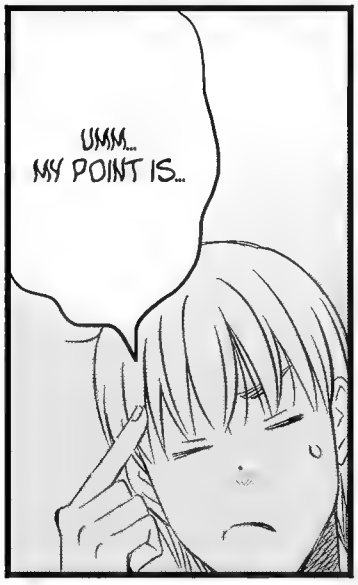

EVEN SO, I BELIEVE THAT I NEED TO WORK.

IT HAPPENED AFTER WE ADOPTED MIU.
ZZZ...
ZZZ...


WELL...
I FEEL LIKE IT'S KIND OF LATE FOR YOU TO REALIZE THIS AFTER BEING A HOUSEHUSBAND THIS WHOLE TIME.
WAS THERE SOMETHING THAT CAUSED YOU TO FEEL THIS WAY?

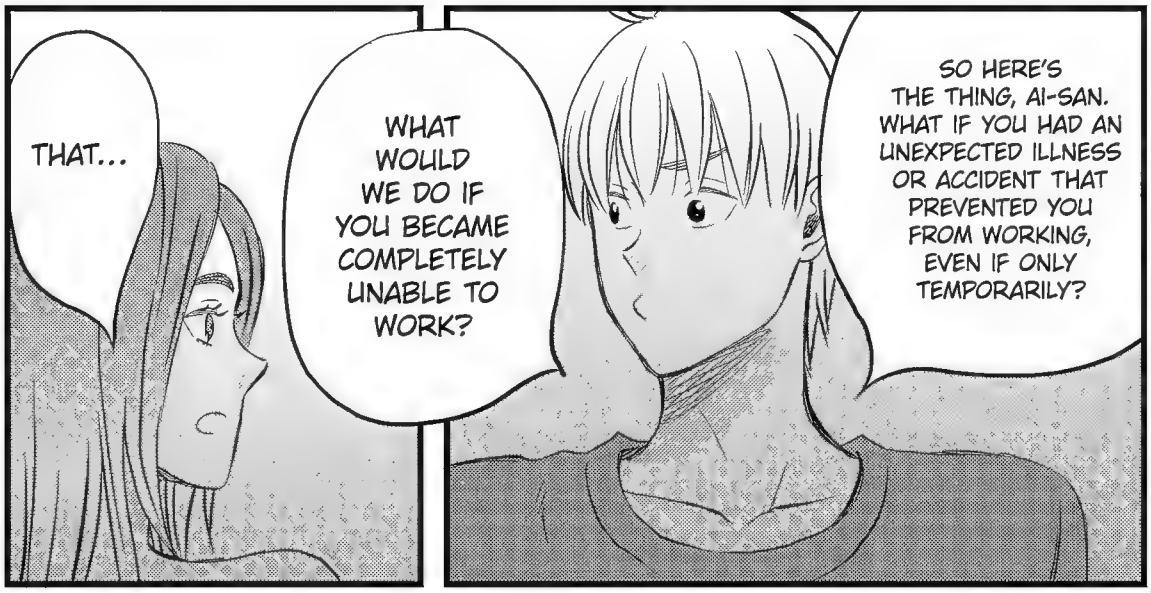

Right now, Milu is at that stage where she crawls and tries to stand up. I can't take my eyes off her at all...
I SUPPOSE IT IS INDEED DIFFICULT FOR ME AND I'M EXTREMELY BUSY.


IT'S NOT BECAUSE OF THAT. ACTUALLY, I ALSO TOLD MY MOTHER ABOUT IT, AND SHE HAD THE SAME REACTION...
We could enroll her in a daycare.
AS I THOUGHT, IT REALLY IS DIFFICULT TO RAISE A CHILD WHEN YOU'RE NOT USED TO IT, HUH?

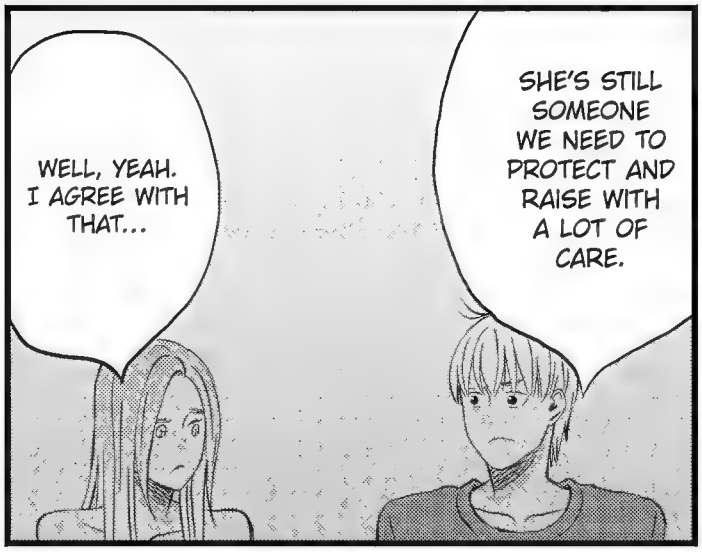

UMM... MY POINT IS...

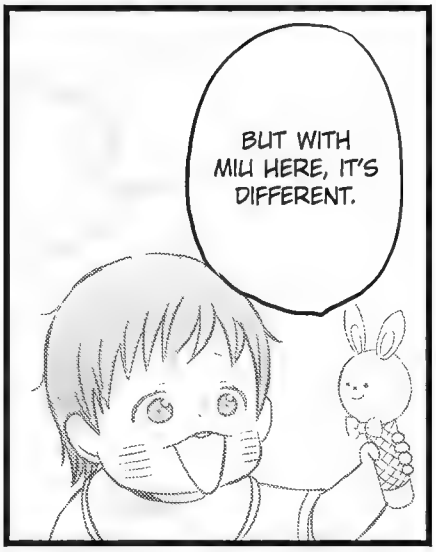
I SEE.
BUT I'M NOT SAYING THIS BECAUSE LOOKING AFTER HER IS TOO DIFFICULT FOR ME...
SO YES, I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT ENROLLING MILU IN A DAYCARE.

HRM.
BUT WITH MILU'S ADDITION, THERE'S NOW ONE MORE MOUTH YOU HAVE TO FEED.
HM? YEAH.
UNTIL RECENTLY, YOUR INCOME WAS ENOUGH TO SUPPORT THREE PEOPLE IN THIS HOUSE.


THAT...
WHAT WOULD WE DO IF YOU BECAME COMPLETELY UNABLE TO WORK?
SO HERE'S THE THING, AI-SAN. WHAT IF YOU HAD AN UNEXPECTED ILLNESS OR ACCIDENT THAT PREVENTED YOU FROM WORKING, EVEN IF ONLY TEMPORARILY?

EVEN IN THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO, I COULD COME UP WITH SOLUTIONS WITH JUN-KUN'S HELP.
HONESTLY, WITHOUT MIU AROUND, I THOUGHT WE COULD SUSTAIN OURSELVES SOMEHOW...
RIGHT? A BIG PROBLEM, FOR SURE.
Yeah, quite the pickle...
It'd be quite the pickle.
WOULD BE A PROBLEM.


WELL, YEAH. I AGREE WITH THAT...
SHE'S STILL SOMEONE WE NEED TO PROTECT AND RAISE WITH A LOT OF CARE.


BUT WITH MIU HERE, IT'S DIFFERENT.

EVEN SO, NO MATTER HOW CAUTIOUS YOU ARE, THERE ARE SOME SITUATIONS THAT YOU SIMPLY CANNOT PREVENT.

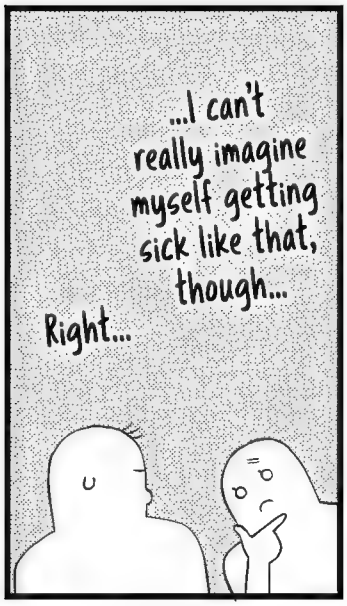
YEAH, I SUPPOSE SO.

BUT THEN AGAIN, IT'S UNLIKELY I'LL EVER GET SICK OR HAVE AN ACCIDENT...

WHO KNOWS, YOU MIGHT BECOME MENTALLY ILL AND NEED TO TAKE SOME TIME OFF WORK...

I'LL BE ABLE TO TELL YOU, "IT'S OKAY! YOU'VE DONE GREAT ALL THIS TIME, SO GET SOME REST!"

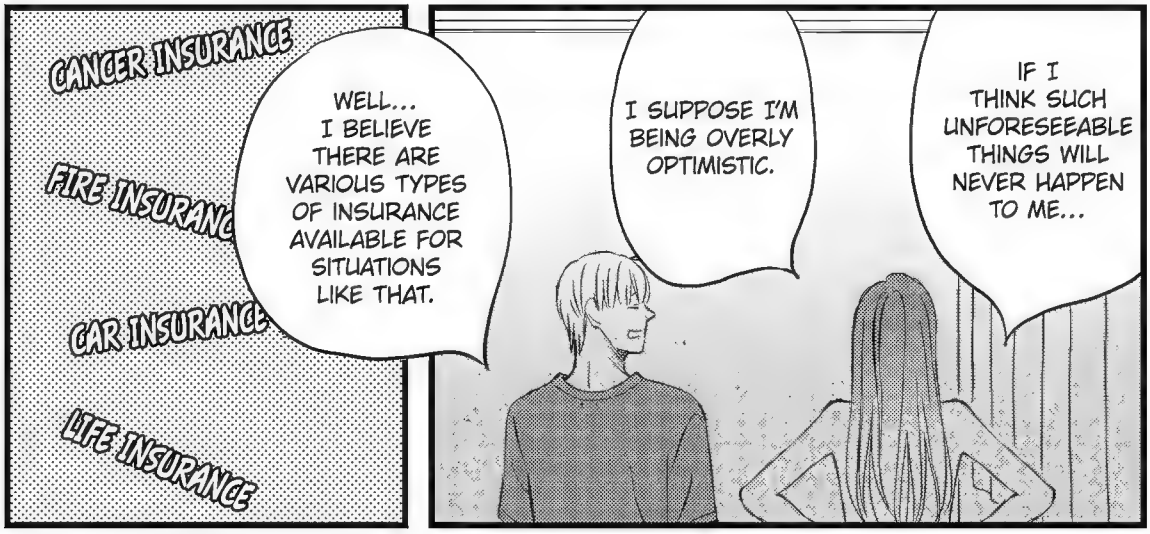
IF SOMETHING LIKE THAT HAPPENS WHILE I'M REGULARLY EMPLOYED...

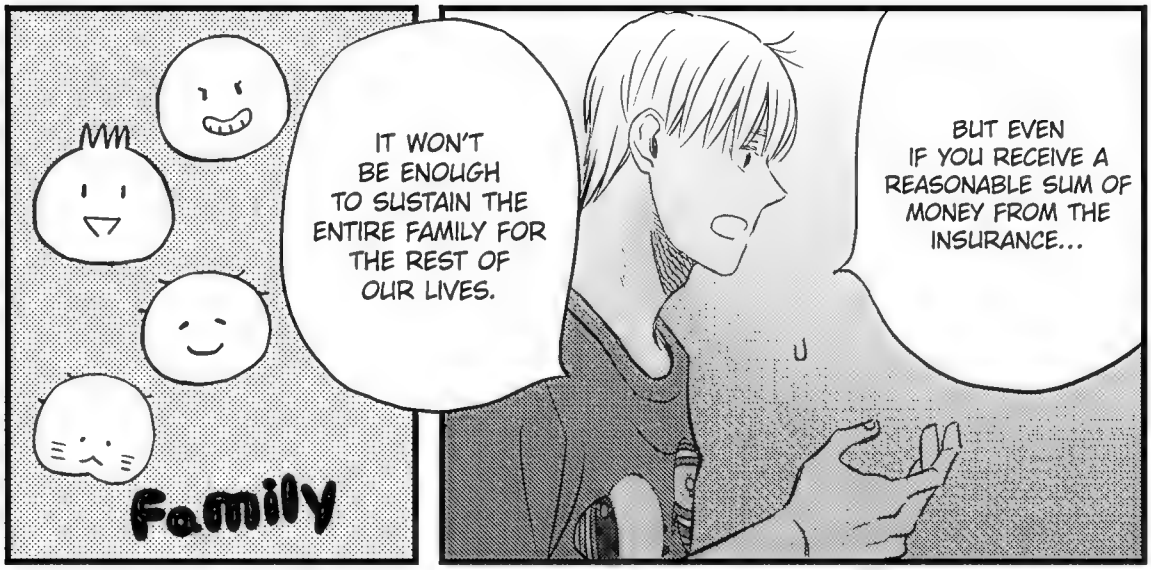

...I can't really imagine myself getting sick like that, though...
Right...

...THAT'S WHAT I CONCLUDED.
I WANT TO BE THE TYPE OF HUSBAND WHO'S ABLE TO SAY THINGS LIKE THAT TO HIS WIFE AT ANY TIME.
...SHIROU-KUN...

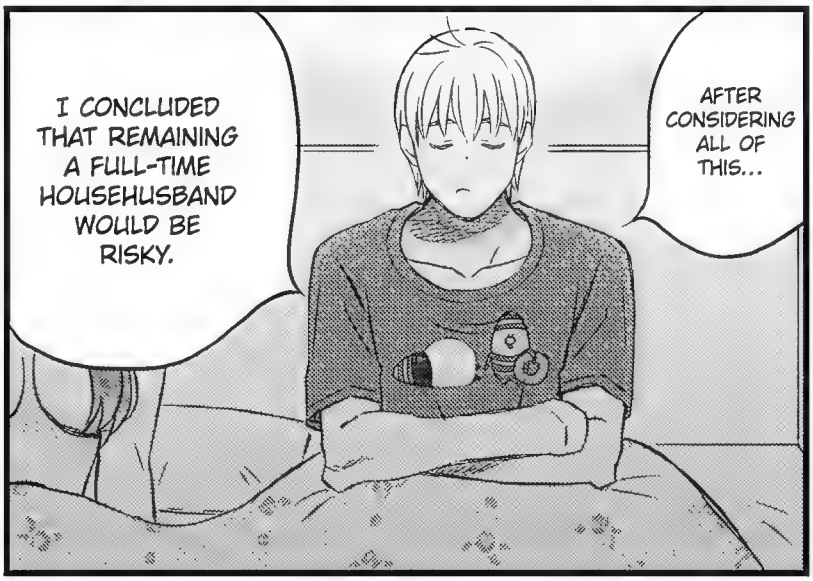
AND NO MATTER HOW CAREFUL I AM, SOME ACCIDENTS ARE INDEED UNAVOIDABLE.

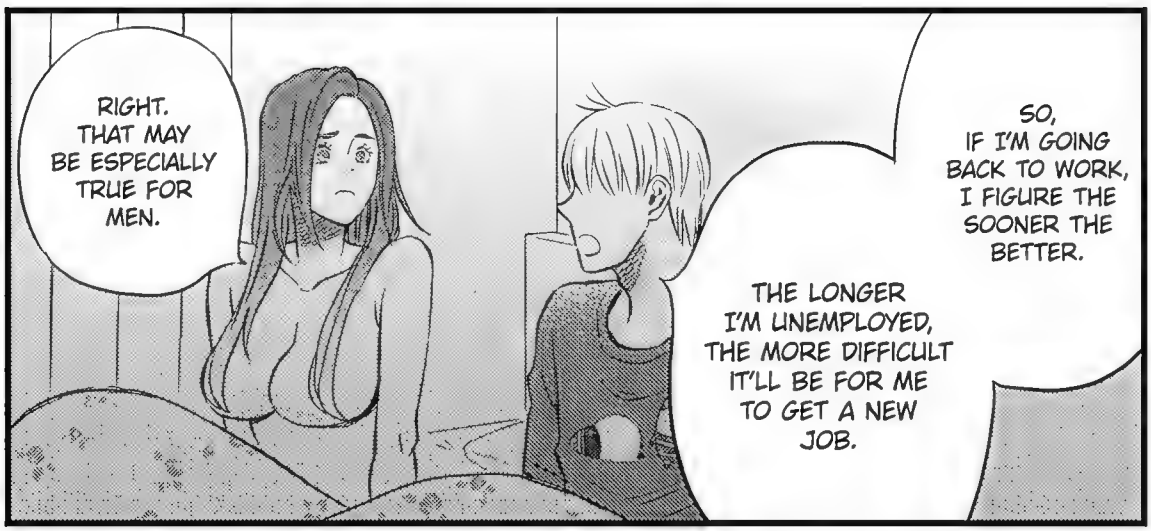
TO SUDDENLY DEVELOP AN INCURABLE DISEASE.
BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S NOT UNCOMMON FOR SOMEONE WHO WAS IN PERFECT HEALTH UNTIL YESTERDAY...

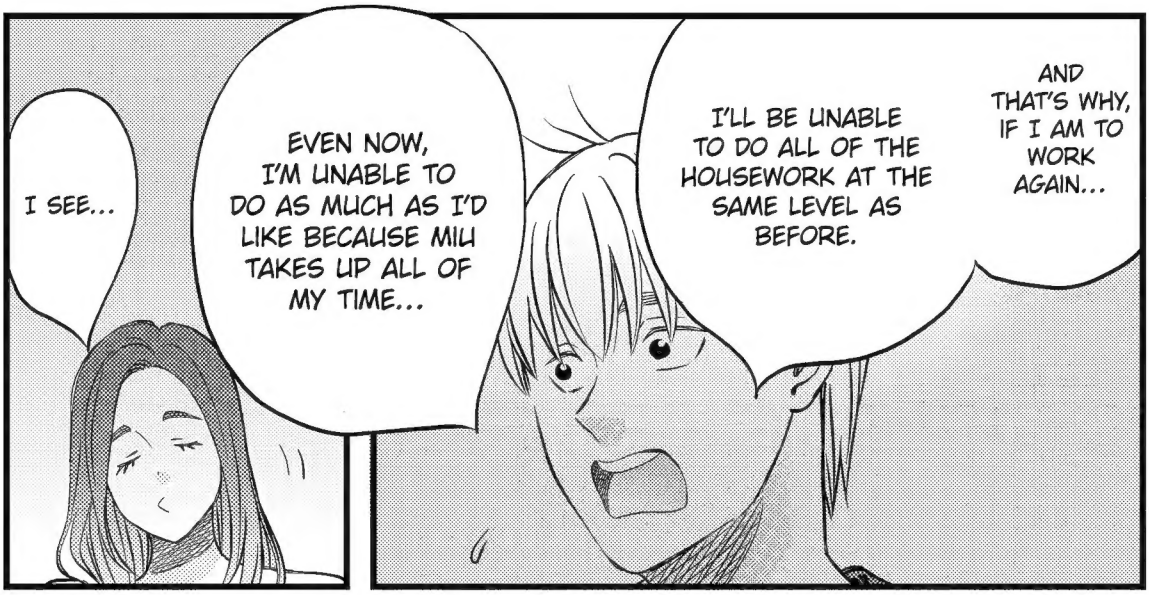

CANCER INSURANCE
FIRE INSURANCE
CAR INSURANCE
LIFE INSURANCE
WELL... I BELIEVE THERE ARE VARIOUS TYPES OF INSURANCE AVAILABLE FOR SITUATIONS LIKE THAT.
I SUPPOSE I'M BEING OVERLY OPTIMISTIC.
IF I THINK SUCH UNFORESEEABLE THINGS WILL NEVER HAPPEN TO ME...


Family
IT WON'T BE ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN THE ENTIRE FAMILY FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES.
BUT EVEN IF YOU RECEIVE A REASONABLE SUM OF MONEY FROM THE INSURANCE...

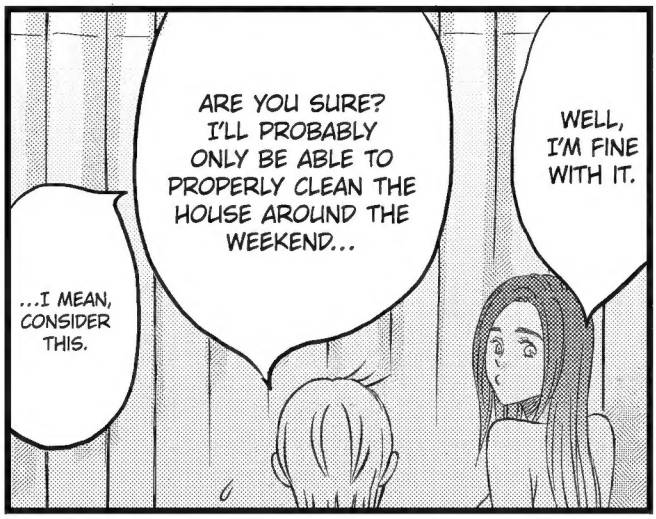
Yeah... Wouldn't that be a dream?
Then again, if you were a word-class billionaire, I would happily remain a househusband!

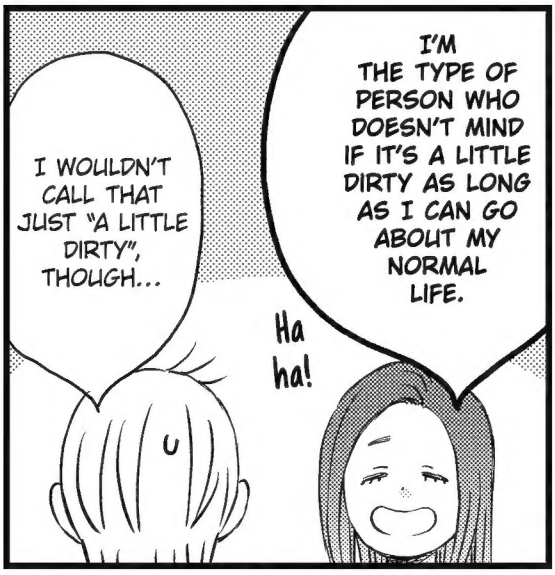

I CONCLUDED THAT REMAINING A FULL-TIME HOUSEHUSBAND WOULD BE RISKY.
AFTER CONSIDERING ALL OF THIS...

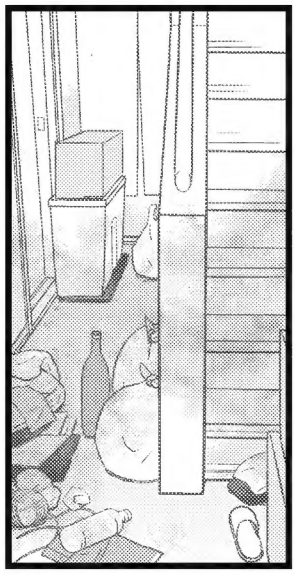

RIGHT. THAT MAY BE ESPECIALLY TRUE FOR MEN.
SO, IF I'M GOING BACK TO WORK, I FIGURE THE SOONER THE BETTER.
THE LONGER I'M UNEMPLOYED, THE MORE DIFFICULT IT'LL BE FOR ME TO GET A NEW JOB.

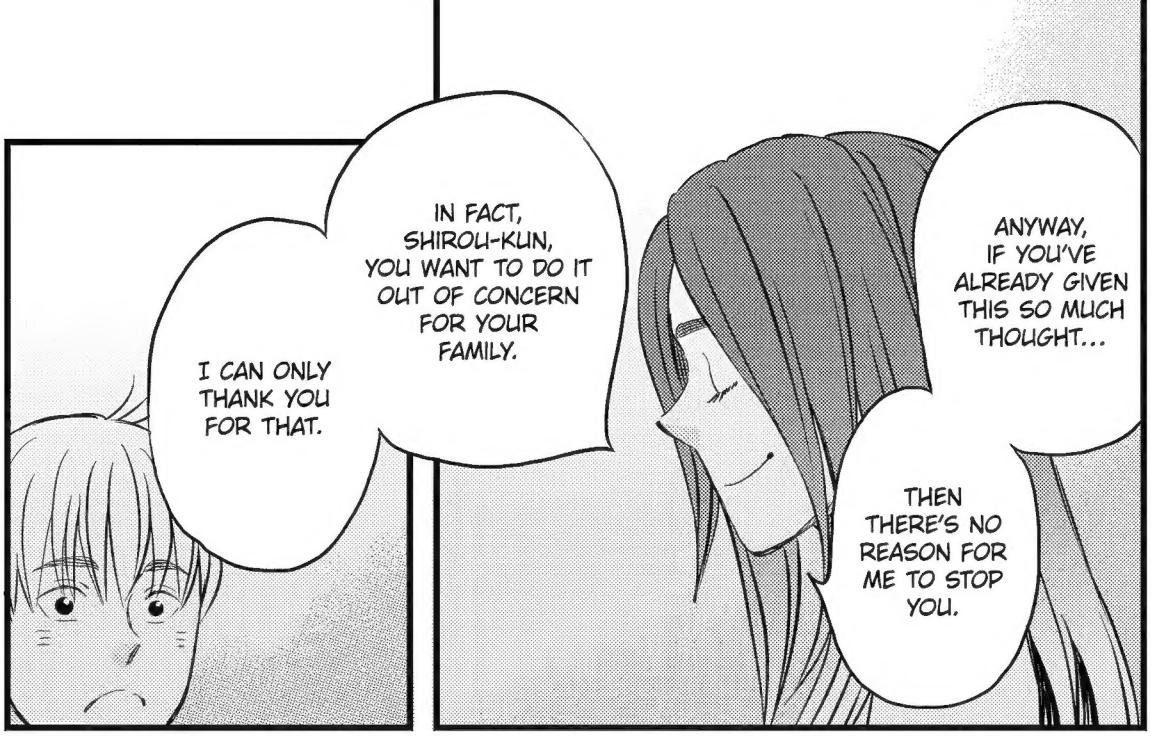

I SEE...
EVEN NOW, I'M UNABLE TO DO AS MUCH AS I'D LIKE BECAUSE MIU TAKES UP ALL OF MY TIME...
I'LL BE UNABLE TO DO ALL OF THE HOUSEWORK AT THE SAME LEVEL AS BEFORE.
AND THAT'S WHY, IF I AM TO WORK AGAIN...

SO THINK ABOUT WHAT THIS HOUSE LOOKED LIKE THE FIRST TIME YOU SAW IT.
UNTIL A FEW YEARS AGO, I USED TO LIVE ALONE IN THIS HOUSE, REMEMBER?

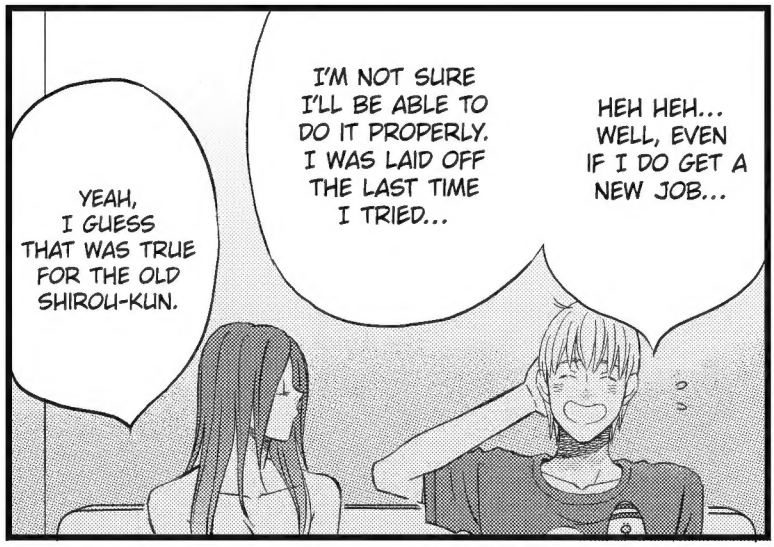

...I MEAN, CONSIDER THIS.
ARE YOU SURE? I'LL PROBABLY ONLY BE ABLE TO PROPERLY CLEAN THE HOUSE AROUND THE WEEKEND...
WELL, I'M FINE WITH IT.

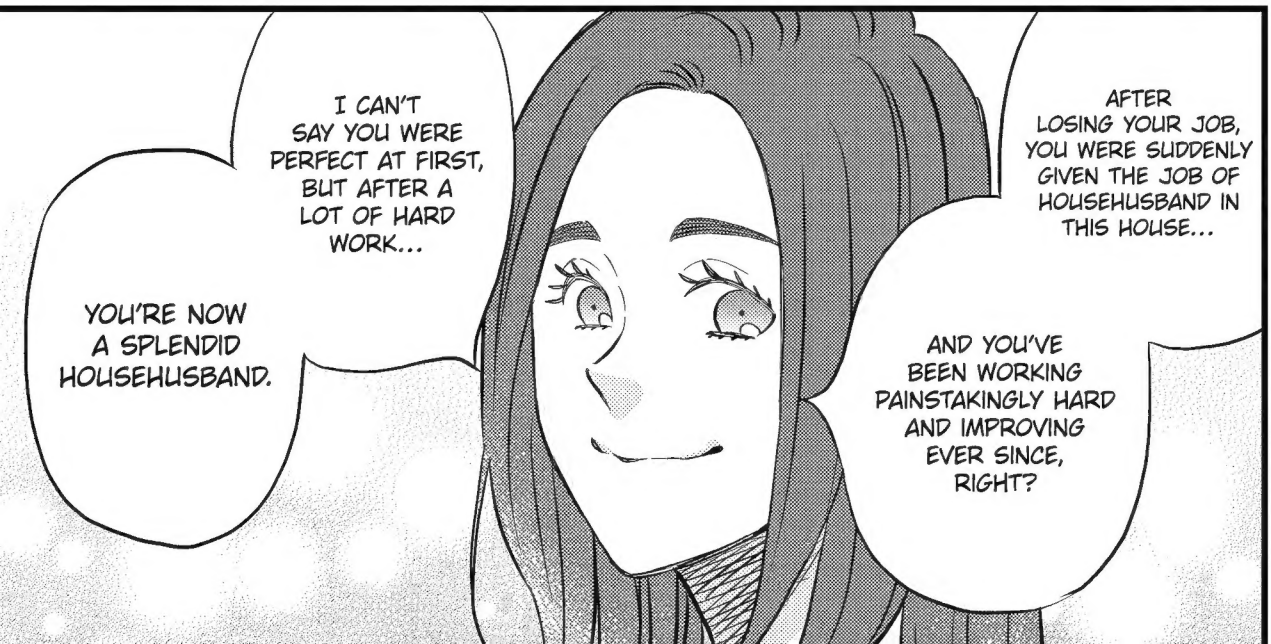

I WOULDN'T CALL THAT JUST "A LITTLE DIRTY", THOUGH...
I'M THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO DOESN'T MIND IF IT'S A LITTLE DIRTY AS LONG AS I CAN GO ABOUT MY NORMAL LIFE.
Ha ha!



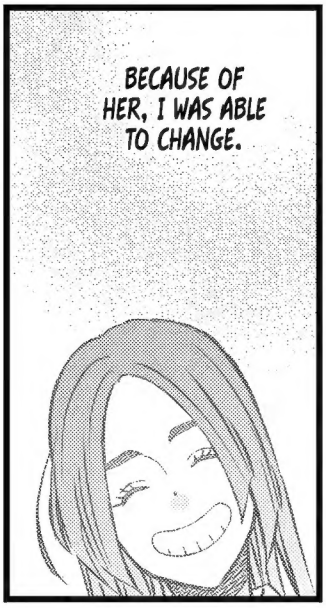

ANYWAY, IF YOU'VE ALREADY GIVEN THIS SO MUCH THOUGHT...
THEN THERE'S NO REASON FOR ME TO STOP YOU.
IN FACT, SHIROU-KUN, YOU WANT TO DO IT OUT OF CONCERN FOR YOUR FAMILY.
I CAN ONLY THANK YOU FOR THAT.

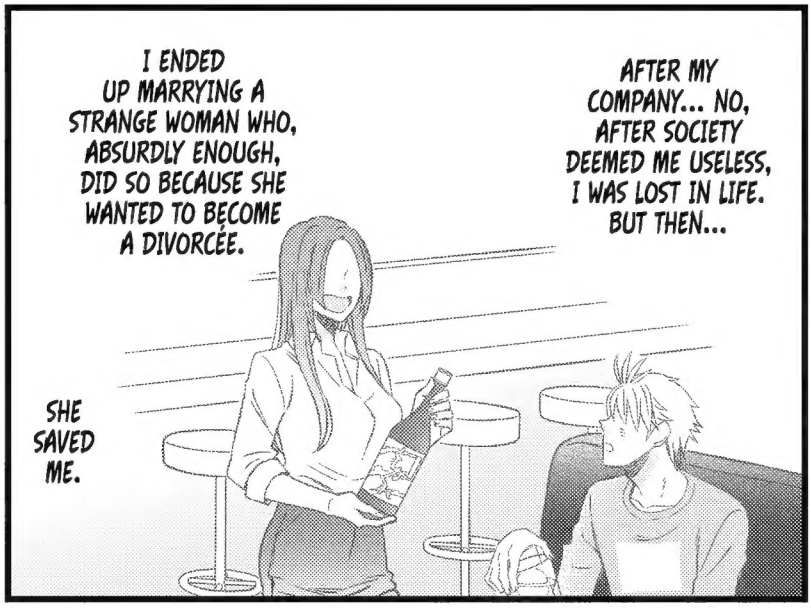
The old me?


HEH HEH... WELL, EVEN IF I DO GET A NEW JOB...
I'M NOT SURE I'LL BE ABLE TO DO IT PROPERLY. I WAS LAID OFF THE LAST TIME I TRIED...
YEAH, I GUESS THAT WAS TRUE FOR THE OLD SHIROU-KUN.


AFTER LOSING YOUR JOB, YOU WERE SUDDENLY GIVEN THE JOB OF HOUSEHUSBAND IN THIS HOUSE...
AND YOU'VE BEEN WORKING PAINSTAKINGLY HARD AND IMPROVING EVER SINCE, RIGHT?
I CAN'T SAY YOU WERE PERFECT AT FIRST, BUT AFTER A LOT OF HARD WORK...
YOU'RE NOW A SPLENDID HOUSEHUSBAND.

...THAT DAY...
I KNOW YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO IT AS WELL AS OR EVEN BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE.
WHEREVER YOU GO AND WHATEVER JOB YOU DO IN THE FUTURE...
YOU'RE FAIRLY CAPABLE, SHIROU-KUN.


BECAUSE OF HER, I WAS ABLE TO CHANGE.


SHE SAVED ME.
I ENDED UP MARRYING A STRANGE WOMAN WHO, ABSURDLY ENOUGH, DID SO BECAUSE SHE WANTED TO BECOME A DIVORCÉE.
AFTER MY COMPANY... NO, AFTER SOCIETY DEEMED ME USELESS, I WAS LOST IN LIFE. BUT THEN...

AND NOW, FOR HER SAKE... I WANT TO CHANGE ONCE MORE.